

sovereignty) on understanding Syrians would continue enjoy water rights they have had in past.

(3) Southern sector. Not discussed in detail. Compromise proposal expected to result from March 10 meeting (Embtel 1438)³ not presented and positions both parties at that meeting reportedly unchanged. Tekoah described territorial problem this sector as most complicated because of "interlacing" of Israel and Arab lands. Claimed that Syrian position March 10 meeting, by suggesting line which would bring Syria "very close to high war", had gone beyond what Israel had previously been led to expect both from conversations Colonel Taxis and prior informal talks with Syrian representatives.

In conclusion Tekoah stated his impression Israel representatives discouraged and "outlook much less optimistic" as result above meeting. Gave as reasons (1) belief here that Syrian representatives are reverting to original positions in matters on which Israel understood compromises had been reached and (2) increasing propensity Syrians present proposals on basis that if Israel not prepared accept Syrian position little use in continuing. He praised Vigier for what he described as efforts keep Syrians in negotiating frame of mind and reported no decision yet on whether there will be meeting March 23.

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³ Telegram 1438 from Tel Aviv, Mar. 12, reported on an Israeli Foreign Ministry official's summary of the Mar. 10 Syro-Israeli meeting. The official stated that both sides presented views on the proposed demarcation line for the southern sector of the demilitarized zone, and each was to report to its government and to Colonel Taxis to propose a compromise line on the basis of this discussion. (683.84A/3-1253)

No. 585

683.84A/3-1253: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Syria (Moose) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

DAMASCUS, March 19, 1953—4 p. m.

601. According UNTSO, meeting March 16 Syrian and Israeli delegations discussed northern and central zones but not southern zone since documentation on land ownership not submitted (Embtel 592, March 12).² Israelis confirmed willingness give up Dardara and land above Huleh necessary compensate dispossessed central zone Arabs. MAC Chairman puzzled by uncompromising attitude

¹ Repeated to Tel Aviv, Amman, Jerusalem, London, and Paris.

² Telegram 592 from Damascus contained a report of the Syria-Israel meeting of Mar. 10. (683.84A/3-1253)